Special Issue

Sheffield TIMES

Watch for the May/June issue coming soon!

Community News for Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA SECOND GENERATION Special Supplement, April 2007

THIS ISSUE IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE FROM THE *SHEFFIELD TIMES*

Every year the Sheffield Association, publishers of the *Sheffield Times*, mails this special issue to all town residents. In it, you'll find:

- The complete text of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and accompanying letter from the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee, to be voted on by Sheffield voters at the Town Meeting, Mon., May 7, at 7pm at Mt. Everett Regional High School. All Sheffield residents are welcome at the meeting, but only registered voters can vote.
- News about the school budget, in the article that begins below.
- Profiles of the candidates running for election (page 6). The election will be May 14, 9am-7pm, at Town Hall.

Look for the regular May/June issue, coming soon at local stores, Library, Town Hall, Senior Center and Transfer Station.

SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSES BUDGET INCREASE OF 6%

The proposed budget of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District for Fiscal Year 2008 totals $14.37 million, up by 6 percent over FY 2007. It was approved by the district's School Committee on March 15 and will be presented to Sheffield's voters for their approval at the town meeting scheduled for Monday, May 7. If approved as proposed by the school district, Sheffield's share of the school operating budget would increase by 9.6 percent, to $5.08 million.

According to Town Administrator Bob Weitz, that would be by far the largest increase in this assessment since the early 1990s. The size of the increase, he says, would force the Board of Selectmen to ask the voters to approve a $216,000 "override" of Sheffield's "levy limit" under Proposition 2½.

cont'd on page 4

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Town of Sheffield

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Berkshire, ss

To the Constables of the Town of Sheffield in said County of Berkshire, **Greeting:**

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the Inhabitants of the Town of Sheffield, qualified to vote in Town affairs, to meet in the auditorium of the Mt. Everett Regional High School on Berkshire School Road in Sheffield on Monday, May 7, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. for the following purposes:

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, such sums of money as listed below, and as may be amended, necessary to defray the expenses of the Town for Fiscal Year 2008, or take any other action relative thereto.

Moderator	$200
Selectmen's Office	$142,813
Board of Assessors	$100,691
Treasurer/Collector	$128,868
Town Clerk	$51,850
Elections & Registration	$17,700
Conservation Commission	$5,425
Planning Board	$6,000
Industrial Development Comm.	$100
Zoning Board of Appeals	$2,000
Town Buildings and Properties	$93,670
Town Report & Communications	$5,500
Legal Services	$15,000
Dispatch Services	$7,096
Police Department	$394,512
Fire Department	$38,915
Inspectional Services	$56,680
Fire Hydrants	$7,942
Dog Officer	$7,500
Highway Department	$539,328
Streetlights	$10,000
Board of Health	$14,334
Visiting Nurse Association	$2,976
Council on Aging	$48,750
Veterans Benefits	$1,000
Library	$143,824
Historical Commission	$100
Memorial Day	$750
American Legion	$500
Care of Soldiers' Graves	$1,320
Ashley Falls Historic District Commission	$150
Agricultural Commission	$500
Interest on Loans	$1
Berkshire County Retirement	$147,344
Worker's Compensation	$15,000
Unemployment Compensation Fund	$1
Group Health (32B) Insurance	$250,000
Employer Medicare	$15,000
Financial Audit	$12,000
Insurance & Bonding	$67,000

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to fix the compensation of the following elected officers of the Town for Fiscal Year 2008, as required by Chapter 41, Section 108 of the General Laws: Moderator $200; Selectman, Chairman $2,100; Selectmen, two members at $1,800 each, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money for the disposal and management of solid waste, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate $3,465,191 to pay the Town's minimum local contribution for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2008.

cont'd on page 2

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate $1,295,769 to pay the Town's portion of the proposed operating budget of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District for fiscal year 2008 as apportioned under the statutory formula enumerated in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 §16B.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to approve the use of an alternative apportionment formula, said formula being an optional alternative to the statutory formula enumerated in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 §16B requiring the annual approval of all member communities in a Regional School District.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate an additional $320,989 to fund the Southern Berkshire Regional School District operating budget apportioned under the alternate apportionment formula, said additional funding shall be contingent upon the approval of a Proposition 2 1/2 override. An appropriation under this Article and the use of the alternative apportionment formula will not provide additional funding for the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Operating Budget.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to approve the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2008 and vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, $216,918 to pay the Town's assessed share of that budget.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $800 to pay the stipend for Sheffield's committee members of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District for Fiscal Year 2008, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $33,602 to pay for vocational education tuition in Fiscal Year 2008, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Health to employ any of its members, including members who also serve on the Board of Selectmen, as Title 5 Witnesses for Septic Systems Evaluation Tests and Inspections at a rate of $35.00 per inspection, and/or Sanitation (Title 5) Inspector at an annual salary of $500 for Fiscal Year 2008, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from Overlay Surplus, and/or transfer from available funds, $54,000 to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures under the provisions of Chapter 40, Section 6 of the General Laws, known as the Reserve Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Treasurer/Collector to sell, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, any parcel or parcels of real estate which have been or may be acquired through the foreclosure of tax title, or take any other action relative thereto.

LETTER FROM BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

New regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Education, adopted January 23, 2007, and the accompanying guidance letter, issued March 2, 2007, make it clear that any apportionment of a regional school district assessment that does not conform to the statutory formula must be approved by **each** town meeting in the district **every** year (for a detailed explanation see *http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Regional/reg_guidance.pdf*). The interim agreement method used by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District does not conform to the statutory formula.

The interim agreement method was adopted by the towns in the district seven years ago to compensate the Town of New Marlborough for prior years' overpayments by reducing its assessment. It turned out that the bulk of the financial burden of this compensation fell to the Town of Sheffield. New Marlborough has as of now been more than fully compensated. The Selectmen and Finance Committee believe the Town of Sheffield should no longer approve of a formula that subsidizes other district towns. The School Budget will not be effected. **The Southern Berkshire Regional School District will still receive the $9,301,750 assessment it has proposed.** The change will only alter the amounts assessed to each Town. The chart below shows the assessments under the statutory formula.

As one can see the assessments to Sheffield and Alford decrease, while the assessments to the other three Towns increase. The interim agreement was never intended to also benefit Egremont and Monterey, but that is the way the numbers worked out. The Selectmen and the Finance Committee believe there is no reason for Sheffield taxpayers to pay $320,989 more than their fair share of the School Budget. Sheffield, as calculated by the Department of Education, will still carry the majority of the financial burden of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

Listed below is the FY'07 tax rate for each of the five Towns in the District, along with the average tax bill for each Town.

If the voters at the Annual Town Meeting do not vote to approve the use of the alternate assessment formula, Sheffield will be below its tax levy limit.

Sheffield Board of Selectmen: *David D. Macy, Chairman, Julie M. Hannum, James T. Collingwood, Sr.*

Sheffield Finance Committee: *David J. Steindler, Chairman, Mark E. Bachetti, John A. James,* Judith G. Schnurr, David A. Smith, Jr.

FY'08 Assessment: $9,301,570	"Alternate" or Interim Assessment Formula		"Statutory" Assessment Formula			
	Enrollment Percentage	FY'08 Assessment	Min. Local Contribution	Additional Assessment	FY'08 Assessment	Difference from "Alternate"
Alford	5.360%	$498,608	$342,161	$127,133	$469,294	- $29,315
Egremont	12.767%	$1,187,506	$997,761	$302,784	$1,300,545	+ $113,039
Monterey	8.696%	$808,853	$673,071	$206,237	$879,308	+ $70,455
New Marlborough	18.542%	$1,724,654	$1,451,720	$439,743	$1,891,463	+ $166,809
Sheffield	54.635%	$5,081,949	$3,465,191	$1,295,769	$4,760,960	- $320,989
TOTAL	100%	$9,301,570	$6,929,904	$2,371,666	$9,301,570	

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds, $31,053 to pay principal and interest on the bonded indebtedness authorized by Town Meeting vote of January 30, 1995, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $32,000 to purchase a cascade system for the Fire Department, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to transfer $100,000 from available funds into the Fire Truck Stabilization Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $750 to the Emergency Response Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $31,500 to purchase a new police cruiser and mobile radio unit and to authorize the Town Administrator to trade-in or sell the Town's 2001 police cruiser, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Stabilization Fund and from available funds, a sum of money, not to exceed $600,000, to be used to construct a new Senior Center on land deeded to the Town by Sheffield Post Home, Inc. on Cook Road behind the American Legion Hall, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $5,000 for commercial personal property tax appraisal consultant services for the Board of Assessors, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, $28,000 for the purchase of a four-wheel drive pickup truck for the Highway Department, or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote to accept Section 18 of Chapter 32B of the General Laws which will require that all retirees, their spouses and dependents who are enrolled in Medicare Part A at no cost to a retiree, their spouse or dependents, or eligible for coverage thereunder at no cost to a retiree, their spouse or dependents, be required to enroll in a medicare health benefits supplement plan offered by the Town.

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town By-Laws by adding the following section to Chapter 52 (Town Meetings), or take any other action relative thereto:
§52-3. The Moderator shall decide all votes at Town Meeting.. If a two-thirds, four-fifths, or nine-tenths vote is required, the Moderator may declare and record the vote as meeting the requirement, providing however, that if a vote so declared is immediately questioned by seven (7) or more voters, the Moderator shall take a counted vote of the meeting.

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to accept a gift of land from Jeane K. Weinstein and Sydney L. Weinstein, doing business as Tamaridge Realty Company ("Donors"), a certain parcel of land containing approximately .42 acres to the Town of Sheffield to be kept and used exclusively for the purposes of a public park in perpetuity for the public good. Said parcel is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at an iron rod to be set in the southerly sideline of Covered Bridge Road, said point being the northwest corner of this parcel and the northeast corner of remaining land of Tamaridge Realty Company; Running thence the following three courses along other land of Tamaridge Realty Company: S-23-58-14-E a distance of 152.86 feet to an iron rod to be set; said point being the southwest corner of this parcel; N-69-05-32-E a distance of 61.08 feet to an iron rod to be set; N-69-05-32-E a distance of 47 +/- feet to the edge of the river, said point being the southeast corner of this property; Running thence northerly along the edge of the river to the southerly sideline of Covered Bridge Road, said point being the northeast corner of this parcel; Running thence the following two courses along the southerly sideline of Covered Bridge Road: S-73-59-44-W a distance of 25 +/- feet to an iron rod to be set; S-73-59-44-W a distance of 138.36 feet to the point of beginning, said parcel of land containing 0.42 +/- acres of land.

Being a portion of the premises as were conveyed to the Donors by deed of Erik Schutz, and Edythe Schutz Gerard, f/k/a Edythe M. Schutz, dated November 16, 1979, and recorded in the Berkshire Southern District Registry of Deeds in Book 470, Page 253. Being the same premises shown as Parcel A on a plan of land prepared from a 2007 field survey by Kelly, Granger, Parsons & Associates, Inc. of Great Barrington to be recorded in said Registry. A copy of said plan has been filed with the Town Clerk.

ARTICLE 25:
To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-Laws as follows, or take any other action relative thereto: 1) Delete in its entirety "Section 6.1.4.5"; 2) Amend Section 6.1.5.1 to read: "Any driveway or access road which will service more than one lot will be designated a common driveway and shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in Sheffield, MA as most recently amended"; 3) Amend the definition of Public utility facility in Section 10 to read: "Public utility facility (not including generating units and personal wireless service facilities, repeaters and towers as defined in Section 7.1), including new utility rights-of-way, or oil, gas, or propane storage tanks in excess of 5000 gallons, as provided under MGL , c . 40A, §3."

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-Laws as follows, or take any other action relative thereto: Add the following new sub-section to Section 3.1.5 (Commercial Uses in the Village Center District and Commercial District): "Section 3.1.5.3. In the Commercial District, shopping centers or complex of offices, businesses or retail establishments of more than 50,000 square feet gross floor area per lot are not permitted."

ARTICLE 27: (Submitted by Petition) To see if the Town will vote to revise the Town of Sheffield Personnel Policy Manual as follows

Section D – Grievance Procedure

1. General Policy

All Full-time and Regular Part-time employees shall have a right to have grievances and concerns regarding their employment heard in an equitable and timely manner. All Full-time and Regular Part-time employees shall be entitled to a prompt written response. When a grievance or concern is found justified, the employee can expect necessary actions to be taken to resolve the grievance. The employee shall not be penalized in any way for filing a grievance, regardless of the outcome.

A grievance is an express violation of these Personnel Rules only and a grievance that does not concern an express provision of these rules shall not be subject to the grievance procedure.

Section E – Discharge

2. Dismissal. Dismissals are involuntary discharges or separations from Town service. All Full-time and Regular Part-time employees of the Town shall be furnished with a written notice specifying the reason for dismissal, and shall have the right to appeal as provided in the grievance section of this manual, as well as other rights as detailed throughout this manual.

cont'd on page 4

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET Cont'd from page 1

(That state law limits property tax increases to 2.5 percent per year.) "Without an override, the town's revenue can only increase between 3.5 percent and 4.5 percent at most," says Weitz. "Increases of this magnitude—more than double the rate of inflation—are simply unmanageable. We can't keep up."

The Massachusetts Department of Education, however, may have saved Sheffield from much of the increase by amending a regulation governing assessments effective Feb. 9. *As interpreted by Sheffield's Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and town counsel, the new rule says that a different method of allocating regional school district assessments can be used than that used by the district in the past, one that would save Sheffield $321,000 and forestall the need to override the levy limit. The school district, however, may be disputing the interpretation. *The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee spell out their reasoning in a letter included on p. 2 with information to be handed out at Town Meeting.

As in other years, Sheffield's share of school costs is by far the largest item in Sheffield's own budget. As proposed by the school district, it will represent over 70 percent of the FY 2008 $7.7 million town budget—one of the highest ratios in Massachusetts.

Budget proposed by School Committee

The table on the next page gives an overview of the district's proposed budget. Items that are increasing include salaries (4 percent); employee benefits, including health insurance (11 percent); and school bussing (almost 20 percent). For the first time, the district expects to pay more under the school choice program than it receives—at least $350,000 more. This is a disappointing development given that as recently as FY 2006 this program contributed $260,000 to revenues. It reflects a net loss of students to other school districts—more children have been "choicing out" of the district than "choicing in." Each choice out results in a loss of about $5,000 a year.

The district's revenues from external sources (mainly state aid) are projected to be $3.95 million, an increase of 5.7 percent.

To supplement these revenues, the district proposes to contribute $244,406 to the FY 2008 budget from its "excess and deficiency" reserve account. This contribution is down from $350,000 last year and will reduce the balance in the account to a projected $300,000.

How much will Sheffield pay?

In the proposed budget, total capital and operating expenses exceed total revenues by $10.12 million. Sheffield and the other four towns in the school district are assessed an amount equal to the difference.

The allocation for the capital budget ($821,000) is fairly straightforward and not in dispute. The towns' shares are proportionate to their respective property tax valuations (subject to some minor adjustments). Sheffield's share for FY 2008 is almost $217,000.

What's under dispute is the allocation of the $9.3 million operating budget assessment. The district believes that it should be determined as it has been since 2001, in accordance with what's called the "Alternative Method." Sheffield's officials think that the allocation should be made in accordance with what's called the "Statutory Method."

The difference between the two methods is significant. The Alternative Method divides the assessment up proportionately in accordance with a 10-year rolling average of the number of students contributed by the respective towns. This method may have made some sense a decade ago when the five towns were demographically and economically more alike than they are today, but today Sheffield now sends a much larger number of students to the district's schools, and unlike the method for allocating the capital budget assess-

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT, Cont'd from page 3

You are also directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Sheffield, qualified to vote in Town elections, to meet in the Town Hall on Depot Street in Sheffield on Monday, May 14, 2007 at 9:00 AM then and there to bring in their votes for the election of the following Town Officers:

One Moderator for one year
One Selectman for three years
One Library Trustee for three years
Two Planning Board members for three years

And to decide on the following question: Shall the Town of Sheffield be allowed to assess an additional $216,911 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Operating Budget allocation utilizing the alternate assessment method for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007? Yes ____ No ____

All of said officers to be voted for on the official ballots furnished at the polls. The polls will be opened at 9:00 AM and closed at 7:00 PM.

You are directed to serve this Warrant by posting an attested copy in seven public places in the Town, not less than seven days before the date of said meeting.

Hereof Fail not, and make return of this Warrant to the Town Clerk, with your doings thereon, at or before the time of said meeting.

Given under our hands and the Seal of the Town of Sheffield this twenty-third day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Seven.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

_____	_____	_____
David D. Macy	Julie M. Hannum	James T. Collingwood, Sr.

In obedience to the within Warrant, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Sheffield qualified to vote in Town or State Elections and Primaries by posting seven attested copies of said warrant in seven public places at least seven days prior to said election.

_____
Attest

_____	_____	_____
Town Clerk	Constable	Date

School Budget Article, cont'd from page 4.

ment, the method takes no account of the towns' and its tax payers relative ability to pay. Sheffield, which contributes almost 55 percent of the students, would pay almost 55 percent of the operating budget assessment. Sheffield's property tax base is only 27 percent of the total property tax base for all five towns, and both its tax rate and average tax bill are much higher than those of the other four towns. The table appearing on the next page gives the details.

The Statutory Method is more "progressive" in that it takes into account factors that reflect the towns' relative ability to pay. Sheffield's share of the operating budget assessment determined in accordance with the Statutory Method would be $321,000 less than what it would be under the Alternative Method, and Sheffield's share of the assessment would increase by 5.2 percent instead of 9.6 percent.

According to Sheffield's officials and town counsel, the Department of Education's amended regulations require that voters in all five towns approve at town meeting the use of the Alternative Method every year it is to be used. Under this interpretation, if Sheffield's (or any other town's) town meeting fails to approve the use of the Alternative Method, the Statutory Method has to be used in that year even if the other towns give their approval. In other words, the Statutory Method is the default formula.

The school district's position seems to be that, under the regional agreement signed by the five towns in 2001, the School Committee is authorized to determine which allocation method is to be used and that the committee voted to use the Alternative Method for FY 2008. The district apparently believes that the regional agreement overrides the amended regulations.

Obviously, changing over to the Statutory Method would be a good thing for Sheffield and its taxpayers. It would significantly reduce the town's share of the FY 2008 operating budget assessment. The town would be about $100,000 under its levy limit, avoiding the difficulties associated with a Proposition 2 ½ override. The relief for an average Sheffield taxpayer, according to the Town Administrator's would be around $170.

The $321,000 reduction in Sheffield's share of the assessments would have to be made up by Egremont, Monterey and New Marlborough, none of which would be forced to a Proposition 2 ½ override, as far as Town Administrator Weitz can tell. Some in the school district say that there is not enough time for the other towns to revise their own municipal budgets before their town meetings. Sheffield's officials point out that the district was aware of the amendment of the regulations long before the towns heard about it and should have realized its implications for—and sought guidance from—the five towns before it finalized and delivered the budget on March 15.

However these arguments are resolved, the schedule for finalizing the school budget may well be delayed for several weeks. The Department of Education's deadline for submitting the budget is July 1.

In a fact sheet distributed by the school district, the district notes that the Boards of Selectmen for the five towns have discussed plans to begin talks over the method of assessment to be used in the future.

Action by voters

According to town officials, it is up to the voters of Sheffield to decide whether the Statutory Method should be used instead of the Alternative Method. Voters at the town meeting on May 7 will be asked to vote on these questions:

- Should the district's budget and allocation of the assessment using the Alternative Method as proposed by the School Committee be approved? If this proposition—Article 7 on the warrant—is approved, the voters participating in the town election on May 14 will be asked to approve a Proposition 2 ½ override in the amount of about $221,000. (If the override proposition is defeated, the approval of the budget at the town meeting would be nullified.)
- If the first proposition is defeated, should the same budget be approved but with Sheffield's assessment for the operating budget reduced to the amount determined using the Statutory Formula? This is Article 5 on the warrant.

—Peter Rowntree

SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS COMPARED

Enrollment, tax rates and assessments for the five towns in the SBRSD

	Student enrollment percentage	Assessment under Alternative Method	Assessment under Statutory Method	Value of tax base (in millions)	Tax rate per $1000 ('07)	Average tax bill ('07)
Alford	5.4%	$498,608	$469,294	$194.3	$5.00	$2,632
Egremont	12.8	1,187,506	1,300,545	404.8	6.30	2,640
Monterey	8.7	808,853	879,308	429.6	5.40	2,437
New Marlborough	18.5	1,724,654	1,891,463	508.5	5.68	2,374
Sheffield	54.6	5,081,949	4,760,960	558.0	11.47	3,376

Sources: SBRSD, Sheffield Finance Committee

SBRSD Proposed budget FOR THE 2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR (from the SBRSD FY08 budget fact sheet)

General Operating (existing)	$ 10,990,888	4.7 percent increase
School Choice Tuition (new cost)	350,000	
Transportation	887,237	19.5 percent Increase
TOTAL OPERATING:	$ 12,228,125	8.8 percent increase
Capital Expense	$ 2,142,945	(7.4 percent decrease)
TOTAL BUDGET:	$ 14,371,070	6.04 percent Increase

The Operating budget includes $281,880 additional for salaries, an increase of 4.3 percent, and an increase for health insurance of $231,710, up 10.8 percent. In previous years, Sheffield received revenue from School Choice Tuition, when more students "choiced in" than "choiced out." The 19.5 percent increase in Transportation costs reflects a new school bus contract and higher gasoline prices.

Candidates-at-a-Glance

Board of Selectmen

Term: Three Years;
Candidates: One—David Macy;
Seats open: One

David Macy

David (Dave) Macy is running unopposed for re-election for the Board of Selectmen. He has served on the Board since 1997. He told the *Times:* "I started my Town service in 1977 when I joined the Fire Department. The reason I joined is that I felt compelled to help people in need. I was also raised to believe that there are no free rides and you need to pay back for the freedom we enjoy. After serving for 20 years, I retired and was appointed to the Zoning Study Committee, where I served as chairman. When the Zoning By-Law was passed, I ran for a seat on the Planning Board. After a successful campaign I was voted chairman of the Board and served as such until I decided to run for a vacant seat on the Board of Selectmen. I was appointed to fill the temporary seat until the next election. At that time I was elected to a three-year term.

"I feel I have the knowledge of town operations and town government to do an excellent job as a Selectman and feel there are many projects I want to see completed in my next term, and I will do this with the support of the voters of the Town of Sheffield."

As a public service, the Sheffield Times provides brief profiles of each of the candidates running for town boards or offices.

Profiles are in alphabetical order by office, with candidates listed alphabetically. All positions are included regardless of whether the position is contested.

Library Trustee

Term: Three years; Candidates: One—Susan Young; Seats open: One

Susan Young

Susan Young is running unopposed for re-election as trustee of the Bushnell-Sage Library, where she has served for 13 years.

Susan has a BA from Vassar and a Masters of Information Science from SUNY Albany. She and her husband, Tom, have lived in Sheffield since 1968, and their sons attended Sheffield Center School. "As a family, we have benefited from living in this community," she says.

Susan is proud of the way the library has flourished since she's been a trustee. "In those 13 years, the Bushnell-Sage Library has become the cultural centerpiece of the Town of Sheffield. It's also the leader among the small libraries in South Berkshire in gathering trustees and librarians together to search for ways to help each other, to discuss common library problems, and to seek ways to stretch all of our budgets. Our Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event, co-sponsored with the Sheffield Historical Society, is an immensely popular happening each January. We have a growing Southern Berkshire Regional School District Half-Day Program, where the library staff provides activities for District children while their teachers are having an in-service training session. Another key event is our Local Authors' Day celebration on the first Saturday of November each year."

She noted that there has been "extraordinary support for the library from town officials, the Town Meeting, the Friends of the Bushnell-Sage Library, and from individual Sheffield residents. Just look at our increased collection, circulation and on-line resources and at the variety of programs the library director has been able to provide, not to mention the upgrading/renovation of the landscaping in front of the library. That project was planned and completed by "green" businesses in town and is named "Millie's Garden" in honor of Millie Smith, one of Sheffield's treasures."

She concluded, "To be a trustee of the Bushnell-Sage Library and to help that library grow into an impressive and active place is an opportunity to make my own contribution to this lovely town."

TOWN MEETING—MAY 7, 2007
7PM, HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, MT. EVERETT REGIONAL SCHOOL

TOWN ELECTIONS—MAY 14, 2007
VOTE 9AM-7PM IN THE CARLTON FRENCH ROOM, TOWN HALL

Planning Board

Term: Three years; Candidates: Two— Dave Smith and Margaret Martin; Seats open: Two

Margaret Martin

Margaret (Maggie) Martin is running unopposed for the Planning Board.

She has been a member of the Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee's Housing Subcommittee since September 2006. She has also been an active volunteer at the Sheffield Senior Center, where she helps with activities and events. Last year Maggie developed a database for the Senior Center that is used to track volunteer time and contributions, important information for obtaining grants.

Born in South Bend, IN, and growing up in New Canaan, CT, Maggie graduated from New Canaan High School in 1972 and attended St. Mary's of Notre Dame and University of Colorado in Boulder, majoring in sociology. Before moving to Sheffield, she lived in Stamford, CT, where she raised two daughters and a son, now in their 20s and living independently. She and her husband, Peter, bought their home on County Rd. in 1998, just one week after their first visit to Sheffield. In July 2005, they moved here full time with their two dogs, Molly and Cody. Since then, Maggie has been studying database development at Berkshire Community College. She has finished the intermediate level and plans to take classes at the advanced level.

Maggie currently works in sales at Cypress Apparel in Great Barrington. Past business experience includes ownership of two restaurants in Long Island, NY, partnership at a Connecticut-based executive search firm, and proprietorship of her own executive search firm. Maggie's hobbies include gardening, photography, swimming, yoga and reading. Maggie enjoys people and she likes to learn new things.

"If I am elected to the Planning Board, I will be learning as I go," she says. She is eager to study the zoning by-laws and laws related to the protection of the environment and to learn from the experiences of surrounding towns. She wants to help young people stay in Sheffield, and she is concerned about affordable housing for the workforce. She is enthusiastic about helping to develop "a balance between providing opportunities for young people to live and work in Sheffield and protecting the environmental beauty," a balance she believes will ensure "a healthy thriving community, attractive for all generations."

David Smith

David Smith is running unopposed for the Planning Board.

Since his semi-retirement, David has become increasingly involved in town organizations. For the past five years he has been active in the Kiwanis Club, where he is in charge of the food trailer. Through the Club, he cooks at Breaking Bread, a food kitchen in Great Barrington, every seven or eight weeks. For the past four years he has served as co-chair of Sheffield in Celebration. He is secretary of the new Agricultural Commission, a state-supported committee that helps local farmers. He served on the Economic Development Subcommittee for the Master Plan. As secretary of the Senior Center Building Committee, he recently presented their plan and budget to the town finance committee.

David was born in New Milford, NJ. He graduated from Lakemont Academy in New York State in 1954 and then attended Agricultural School at Cornell for 1 ½ years. For 40 years he worked in management in the graphic arts industry. In 1966 he moved to Great Barrington and in 1970 he married Diane West from Sheffield. They lived in a number of different places until they returned to settle permanently in Sheffield in 1996, to live near Diane's family. David have five adult children and 10 grandchildren.

From 1996 to 2003 David owned Wildflowers, a florist shop in Great Barrington. After selling that business, he worked part time for two years at Sears for his son, David Smith, Jr. David now works part time parking cars at Birches-

Town Moderator

Term: One year; Candidates: One—Bruce Person; Seats open: One

Bruce Person

Bruce Person has served as Sheffield's Town Moderator for the last 15 years.

Born in Meriden, CT, Bruce graduated from the University of Connecticut at Storrs in 1965 and Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in 1969. He came to Sheffield in 1971 after serving in the Air Force for two years and has lived here ever since. He practiced dentistry in Great Barrington for 32 years and is now retired. He has two adult sons and three grandchildren.

He is a registered Republican. Bruce is also Town Constable, a former chairman of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee and Trustee of Berkshire School. He is also very involved with the Great Barrington Rotary Club and was chairman of their Scholarship Assistance Fund.

Bruce looks forward to the Town's Annual Meeting. He attempts to moderate it "in a non-confrontational way," respecting all opinions. "It is my aim," he said, "that everyone goes home friends."

David Smith, Sr. profile, cont'd.

Roy Funeral Home and helping Dolby's Florists with deliveries during holiday seasons.

Because he is semi-retired, David feels he now has time to give back to the community. He says, "If you want to see things changed, you have to get involved." He feels his background and skills will benefit the Planning Board, and he is looking forward to working with the other members. David wants "to make Sheffield a destination instead of a pass-through" and he feels "the town is ready to make some changes." In particular, he would like to see more sidewalks, public restrooms, a small visitors' center and more restaurants. Without changing the character of the town, he would like to see more help to local businesses.

TOWN MEETING—MAY 7, 2007
7PM, HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, MT. EVERETT REGIONAL SCHOOL

TOWN ELECTIONS—MAY 14, 2007
VOTE 9AM-7PM IN THE CARLTON FRENCH ROOM, TOWN HALL

Nonprofit org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Sheffield, MA
Permit Number 2

Sheffield TIMES

Community Newsletter for Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA

Issue Editors: Kathy Orlando & Andrea Scott; **Library Editor:** Peter Rowntree; **Advertising Sales:** Tara White; **Distribution:** Inez Flinn. **Staff:** Sandy & Dale Alden, Rae Eastman, Fred Gordon, Gillian Hettinger, Ellen & Peter Rowntree, Judy Schumer, Ellen Weiss, Barbara West, John Wightman

Published by: The Sheffield Association, P.O. Box 1339, Sheffield, MA 01257

PLEASE SUPPORT THE SHEFFIELD TIMES!

I want to support the Sheffield Times! Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of _____, made payable to the Sheffield Association, PO Box 1339, Sheffield, MA 01257

Name:_____
(as you would like it to appear in acknowledgments)

Address: _____
(where you would like the Sheffield Times sent)

☐ I'd like my contribution to remain anonymous

☐ I'd like to get more involved with the Sheffield Times

☐ I am particularly interested in or have experience with _____

The Sheffield Times is provided free of charge at public distribution sites throughout Sheffield and Ashley Falls. Everyone who makes a donation will receive a copy by mail, so please note on this form if you do not want it sent to you and we won't add to your recycling pile! Donations are tax-deductible through a partnership with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

This special supplement has been mailed to all addresses in Town by the Sheffield Association—please excuse duplications.

Sheffield TIMES

Community Newsletter for
Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA
P.O. Box 1339
Sheffield, MA 01257
sheffieldtimes@hotmail.com

POSTAL PATRON